

Judges 5:1-23 – Deborah’s Song about God’s Work

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Poetry brings out in the most beautiful way acts of love in this life. And when it is an act of God, poetry is even more beautiful and meaningful. (Henry: No poetry can compare to sacred神圣poetry.) So God’s people must take the time to acknowledge and speak of God’s acts of love – even sing about them! Today you will see Deborah’s hand at poetry as she wrote about God’s act of saving Israel from King Jabin and his commander, Sisera.

Our headings are:

The Direction of the Song of Deliverance

The Details of the Song of Deliverance

Our goals are: **That you will learn to sing with zeal (and call others to do so) because God destroyed your enemy, the Devil, at the cross, and because he continues to destroy your enemies today.**

The Direction of the Song of Deliverance

1 Then **Deborah and Barak** the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying: 2 "When **leaders lead** in Israel, When the **people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD!** 3 "Hear, **O kings! Give ear, O princes!** I, even I, will sing **to the LORD**; I will sing praise to the **LORD God of Israel.**

1. Deborah and Barak sang this song, but it was written by Deborah and directed to Jehovah - covenant God –in celebration for what he had done. God brought deliverance 救出to Israel from Jabin and Sisera.

Be reminded that whatever good you accomplish in this world, only Jehovah, not some generic, abstract god, deserves all praise. And of course the only way to this covenant God is through the sacrifice of Jesus who was pictured by animal sacrifices in the Old Testament. A token acknowledgment of a nonspecific god is not appropriate. Don’t join with others who praise any other god than the God of the Bible.

2. Deborah wanted the leaders and people of Israel, and the kings of the world to hear the words she was singing to encourage them to sing. No one, citizenry公民, leaders, or foreigner is too big to bow the knee before the Lord.

Psalm 2:10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling.

3. And notice how the leaders led (as opposed to having women leading them) – and how the people followed. These leaders did not send people to war, but led them! And the people trusted their leaders and willingly went to war! This was what God demanded. So because of God’s Word to the leaders and the people, the people turned to praise God.

Psalm 110:3 Your **people shall be volunteers** In the day of Your power...

4 "LORD, when You went out from Seir, When You marched from the field of Edom, The **earth trembled** and the **heavens poured**, The clouds also poured water; 5 The **mountains quashed** before the LORD, This Sinai, before the LORD God of Israel.

4. And then she gave historic details about this wonderful covenant God. (It is always good to know history.) Jehovah was a powerful God. When he touched the earth it trembled – probably referring to what God did to Edom (Seir) earlier as Israel was capturing Canaan. At that time God rained storms upon Edom, probably referring to different judgments. **And then on Mt. Sinai his glory was so powerful** that no one could look at him. There probably was an avalanche雪崩 which swallowed the enemy at some time. (Could have been figurative when rebellious Israelites were consumed or literal, of which we have no account in the Bible.) God is an awesome God! Yes, he deserves all praise.

5. You too are called to be witnesses of Christ’s work 3000 years later – of God’s offering his Son to save the world.

You must remember your marvelous deliverance from sin, misery, and death.

Psalm 40:2 He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry泥泞的clay粘土, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps. 3 He has put a new song in my mouth—Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the LORD.

You too are called to bring sacrifice of praise to our God for your deliverance through Jesus, which is the fruit of your lips. Don’t be too big to acknowledge everything God does for you. All your praise must be directed to God. **Hebrews 13:15** By him therefore let us **offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually**, that is, the **fruit of our lips** giving thanks to his name.

But first, you must give yourself to the Lord. Otherwise your praise is not acceptable!

2Corinthians 8:5 And not only as we had hoped, but **they first gave themselves to the Lord**, and then to us by the will of God.

The Details of the Song of Deliverance

6 "In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, In the days of Jael, The **highways were deserted**, And the travelers walked along the byways小道. 7 Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel, Until I, Deborah, arose, **Arose a mother** in Israel. 8 **They chose new gods**... Then there was war in the gates; **Not a shield or spear was seen** among forty thousand in Israel.

1. Before the deliverance, Israel's social, economic, and political conditions were terrible. There was little leadership and no security. No one traveled to visit friends or family. Trade came to a halt停下来 for there was no protection in the villages. There was no tilling 耕作 of the ground. Food became short. Life was hard for Israel. Jabin enslaved them. You see, Israel chose other gods of their own free will and became weak. They became tired of Jehovah. So he gave them war. But they had few weapons for defense.

2. Then God provided not a king, nor an army commander, but a mother – to care for Israel and call her back to truth. Deborah does not call herself a “powerful judge” or a “military leader.” How humble Deborah was!

9 My heart is with the rulers of Israel Who offered themselves willingly with the people. Bless the LORD! 10 "Speak, you who **ride on white donkeys**, Who sit in **judges' attire**, And who walk along the road.

3. Though they were hopeless, upon hearing the Word of God, the Israelites returned to God and God delivered them. The rulers assumed their roles again. They sat on white donkeys and had special clothing. This shows that the judges were honored. It further shows that the land was safe. Everyone had freedom again. **Laws protect freedom.**

11 Far from the noise of the archers弓箭手, among the watering places, There they shall **recount the righteous acts of the LORD**, The righteous acts for His villagers in Israel; Then the people of the **LORD shall go down to the gates**.

4. Then peace returned and the people worshiped...recounting God's goodness. They could seek justice and carry out business again at the “gates,” for they were restored.

12 "**Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, sing a song! Arise, Barak**, and lead your captives俘虏 away, O son of Abinoam!

5. Deborah wanted them wide awake and focused, for she knew that the work of praising God is not always easy! You have to concentrate. You have to think of what God does.

6. Deborah then used the picture of Barak taking Jabin's soldiers as prisoners as a ground for praising God. Even the destruction 毁坏 of the wicked is ground for praising God. When God destroys the wicked persecutors of his people, praise him. When you conquer the lost for Christ praise him. And for when Christ conquered the Devil on the cross, praise him. BTW, can you imagine how this compares to the lyrics today...songs of self-aggrandizement 强化 - promoting one's own sexuality and lusts? What songs do you hum? What songs do churches sing? Don't they often sound like romantic songs that only speak of soft things and avoid themes of God's destruction?

13 "Then **the survivors came down**, the people against the nobles; The **LORD came down** for me against the mighty.

7. The Israelites who were trapped on the mountain by Sisera came down and with God's help destroyed Sisera's army.

14 From **Ephraim** were those whose roots were in Amalek. After you, **Benjamin**, with your peoples, From **Machir** rulers came down, And from **Zebulun** those who bear the recruiter's staff. 15 And the princes of **Issachar** were with Deborah; As Issachar, so was Barak Sent into the valley under his command; Among the divisions of **Reuben** There were great resolves of heart. 16 Why did you sit among **the sheepfolds羊圈**, To hear the pipings for the flocks羊群? The divisions of Reuben have great searchings of heart. 17 **Gilead stayed beyond** the Jordan, And **why did Dan remain on ships? Asher continued at the seashore**, And stayed by his inlets入口. 18 **Zebulun is a people who jeopardized their lives to the point of death**, Naphtali also, on the heights of the battlefield战场.

8. Then the other tribes came and helped. You might remember that Deborah only asked for Naphtali and Zebulun, the 2 nearest tribes, to fight Sisera. But other tribes came to help as well. They showed a care and love for others. Caring for others and sharing with others is the antidote解药 for jealousy...like you speak up for the persecuted!

9. Who were those who helped?

a. Ephraim were the foundation of the attack in Amalek.

b. Benjamin was close to the Amalekites and led the attack.

c. Machir (Manasseh) provided military officers.

d. Zebulun and Naphtali were in charge of recruitment and jeopardized their lives in battle. They refused to die as slaves and went down from the mountain against the iron chariots of Sisera.

e. Issachar followed Barak directly into battle.

Each tribe used the gift God had given to them. As one saved by Christ, do you know your gift? Are you using it?

1Peter 4:10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold多种grace of God.

10. But there were those who did not help and it was recorded – now for 3000 years.

a. Reuben. They partly lived east of the Jordan and were concerned that they might lose their sheep and cattle. They chose neutrality中立. Maybe they wanted to help, but didn't! But might you be neutral when your brothers are being enslaved and executed? They were Pocos y locos – few and foolish. They forgot about unity!

b. Gilead (Gad and ½ tribe of Manasseh east of the Jordan). They were in a mountainous多山rocky region and probably thought they were safe so they didn't have to get involved in the fight.

c. Dan. They saw opportunity for making money and couldn't be bothered to help. Isn't this like those who are so busy with making money that they have no time for the needy?

d. Asher. They chose to attend to their crops and produce their "dainties. 美味" They ignored Jehovah's kingdom! But they could not expect the blessings of God unless they played their part in the kingdom. It is often said that 20% of the people in the church do 80% of the work. Which side are you? The more you love the Lord, knowing what he had done for you, the more you will love his kingdom, and the more you will work for his people.

Do you think God doesn't notice when you ignore your needy Christian brother... the persecuted church ...someone who might take up some of your time...someone who is not as interesting?

19 "The kings came and fought, Then the kings of Canaan fought In Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo; They took no spoils of silve没有分赃银r.

11. Some foreign nations which joined in a confederacy同盟against Israel were cursed and got no spoils. They finished with death. Anyone who did not help God's people was counted as not helping God.

20 They fought from the heavens; The stars from their courses fought against Sisera.

So God sent the severest严峻 judgments: hail, thunder, rain, lightening, fire and the sword! They would have scared the horses. These elements were like soldiers in their regiment...following orders.

21 The torrent激流of Kishon swept them away, That ancient torrent, the torrent of Kishon. O my soul, march on in strength!

The rivers fought for God like a broom扫帚to sweep always garbage. This gave Israel strength to move on.

22 Then the horses' hooves蹄pounded, The galloping, galloping of his steeds战马.

Even the horses in which the nations trusted were hurt on the rocks as they escaped God's judgment.

23 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the LORD, 'Curse its inhabitants bitterly, Because they did not come to the help of the LORD, To the help of the LORD against the mighty.'

Meroz was singled out for curse by God for not helping God's people. They must have done something terrible that God committed them to be forgotten. And when God curses you, you are cursed indeed.

Those who are not in Christ's army are on a losing side. Hear the wisdom of Abigail "the joy of my father."

1Samuel 25:28 "Please forgive the trespass侵入of your maidservant. For the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the LORD..."

Conclusion:

Israel rejoiced and sang about the great work of Jehovah, and they called on small and great –even foreigners to do so! And what a marvelous deliverance it was. God used the willing volunteers on earth and he used his wonderful providence!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: **1. Make it a habit to sing about the wonderful things God has done.** Indeed, what wonderful things the Lord has done for you...for your salvation – he crushed the Devil...and every day for your sanctification – he mortifies腐坏your flesh. **2. You are to call the nations now to praise God.** And to do this, you must first make sure that their come through the sacrifice of Jesus, for no one can come to the Father except through the Son.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you will not conquer. Rather, you will be crushed, that is, except you surrender to God. He does not desire the death of the wicked. He does not desire that you go to hell. But that is what his justice demands. So if you plead 央求 with Jesus to take your justice, then God will remove your sins and give you a new life.